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CHILDREN'S LIBRARIANS' SECTION

FIRST SESSION

Saturday afternoon, May 20.

The first session of the Children's librarians' section was a public meeting held in the Shakespeare club-house, under the auspices of the Pasadena women's clubs. Mr. HENRY E. LEGLER, librarian of the Chicago public library, gave an address, illustrated with lantern slides, on

LIBRARY WORK WITH CHILDREN

Not long since a man of genius took a lump of formless clay, and beneath the cunning of his hand there grew a great symbol of life. He called it Earthbound. An old man is bowed beneath the sorrow of the world. Under the weight of burdens that seemingly they cannot escape, a younger man and his faithful mate stagger with bent forms. Between them is a little child. Instead of a body supple and straight and instinct with freedom and vigor, the child's body yields to the weight of heredity and environment, whose crushing influence press the shoulders down.

In this striking group the artist pictures for us the world-old story of conditions which meet the young lives of one generation, and are transmitted to the next. It is a picture that was true a thousand years ago; it is a picture that is faithful of conditions to-day. Perhaps its modern guise might be more aptly and perhaps no less strikingly shown, as it recently appeared in the form of a cartoon illustrating Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's verse:

The Cry of the Children

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
Ere the sorrow comes with years?
They are leaning their young heads against
their mothers,
And that cannot stop their tears.
The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
The young birds are chirping in the nest,

The young fawns are playing with the shadows,

The young flowers are blowing towards the west—

But the young, young children, O my brothers,

They are weeping bitterly!

They are weeping in the playtime of the others,

In the country of the free.

Do you question the young children in the sorrow,

Why their tears are falling so?

The old man may weep for his to-morrow Which is lost in long ago;

The old tree is leafless in the forest,

The old year is ending in the frost,

The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest, The old hope is hardest to be lost;

But the young, young children, O my brothers,

Do you ask them why they stand

Weeping sore before the bosoms of their mothers,

In our happy Fatherland?

* * * * *

Go out, children, from the mine and from the city,

Sing out, children, as the little thrushes do.

Pluck your handfuls of the meadow cow-slips pretty,

Laugh aloud to feel your fingers let them through!

Only in recent years has there grown into fulness a conception of what the duty of society is towards the child. For near two thousand years it was a world of grown-ups for grown-ups. Children there have been—many millions of them—but they were merely incidental to the scheme of things. Society regarded them not as an asset, except perhaps for purposes of selfish exploitation. If literature reflects contemporary life with fidelity, we may well marvel that for so many hundreds of years the

boys and girls of their generation were so little regarded that they are rarely mentioned in song or story. When they are, we are afforded glimpses of a curious attitude of aloofness or of harshness. Nowhere do we meet the artlessness of childhood. In a footnote here, in a marginal gloss there, such references as appear point to torture and cruelty, to distress and tears. In the early legends of the Christians, in the pagan ballads of the olden time, what there is of child life but illustrates the brutal selfishness of the elders.

Certainly, no people understood as well as did the Jews that the child is the prophecy of the future, and that a nation is kept alive not by memory but by hope. Childhood to them was "the sign of fulfillment of glorious promises; the burden of psalm and prophecy was of a golden age to come, not of one that was in the dim past." So in the greatest of all books we come frequently upon phrases displaying this attitude:

"There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."

"They shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children."

And most significant of all: "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

In the centuries intervening, up to a hundred years ago, the men of pen and the men of brush give us a few touches now and then suggestive of childhood. However, they are observers rather than interpreters of childhood and its meaning. In the works of the great master painters, the dominant note is that of maternity, or the motive is devotional purely. Milton's great ode on the Nativity bears no message other than this. In the graphic tale that Chaucer tells about Hugh of Lincoln, race hatred is the underlying sentiment, and the innocence of the unfortunate widow's son appears merely to heighten the evil of his captors and not as typical of boyhood.

Of the goodly company known collect-

ively as the Elizabethan writers, silence as to the element of childhood is profound. In all the comedies and the tragedies of the greatest dramatist of all, children play but minor parts. In none of them save in King John, where historic necessity precludes the absence of the princes in the Tower, they might be wholly omitted without impairment of the structure. In the Merry Wives of Windsor, Mistress Anne Page's son is briefly introduced, and is there made the vehicle for conversation which in this age might be regarded as gross suggestiveness.

True, that is a rarely tender passage in the Winter's Tale wherein Hermione speaks with her beloved boy, and the pathos of Arthur's plea as he asks Hubert to spare his eyes is of course a masterpiece of literature; these, however, the sum total of the great dramatist's significant references to childhood.

In the great works on canvas, save where the Christ-child is depicted, may be noted that same absence of the spirit of childhood. Wealthy and royal patrons, indeed, encouraged great artists to add favorite sons and daughters to the array of portraits in their family galleries. In time, the artists gave to the progeny of the nobility and the aristocracy generally, such creations as to them seemed appropriate to their years. These poses are but the caricature of childhood. Morland, Gainsborough, Sir Joshua Reynolds and other artists of their day represented the children of their wealthy patrons in attitudes which savor somewhat of burlesque, though it may have been intended quite seriously to hedge them about with spontaneity.

It has been said that "a child's life finds its chief expression in play, and that in play its social instincts are developed." If this be true, we find in some contemporary canvases of this English school a curious reproduction of the favorite pastimes of children. One is called "bird-nesting," the title descriptive of the favorite diversion thus depicted. Another bears the legend "Snow-balling," and with no apparent disapproval save on the part of the little victims, shows a group of larger children ruth-

lessly snow-balling some smaller ones who have sought shelter in the portico of a church. Some distance down the street the form of an aged woman suggests another victim of youthful playfulness.

A century and a half ago there was born, frail at first but with constant growth, a perception that the great moving forces of life contain elements hitherto disregarded. Rousseau sounded his thesis, Pestalozzi began to teach, and but a little later on, Froebel expounded his tenets. We need not be concerned as to the controversial disputation of rival schools of pedagogues whose claims for one ignore the merits of the other. A new thought came into being, and both Pestalozzi and Froebel contributed to its diffusion—whether in the form of Pestalozzi's ideal, "I must do good to the child," or Froebel's, "I must do good through the child," or perhaps a measurable merging of the two.

Responsive to the note of life and thought around them, the great authors of prose and verse began to inject the new expression of feeling into what they wrote. Perhaps best reflected, as indeed it proved most potent in molding public opinion, this thought entered into the novels of Charles Dickens. These, in the development of child life as a social force, not only recorded history; they made history, and the virile pencils of Leech and Phiz and Cruikshank aided what became a movement.

For the first time in literature, with sympathetic insight, there was laid bare the misery of childhood among the lowly and unfortunate, and the pathos of unhappy childhood was pictured with all its tragic consequences to society as a whole. In the story of Poor Joe, the street-crossing sweeper, who was always told to move on, we read the stories of thousands of the boys of to-day. His brief tenancy of Tom-all-Alones shows us the prototype of many thousands of living places in the slums of our own time. Conditions which environ growing boys and girls—not only thousands of men, but many millions—in the congested cities of the Anglo-Saxon world, are well suggested by the names which have been given in derision, or brutally descrip-

tive as the case may be, to such centers of human hiving as the House of Blazes and Chicken-foot Alley, in Providence; Hell's Kitchen in New York; the Bad Lands in Milwaukee; Tin Can Alley, Bubbly Creek and Whiskey Row back of the stockyards in Chicago. In these regions and in others like them darkness and filth hold forth together where the macaroni are drying; broken pipes discharge sewage in the basement living quarters where the bananas are ripening; darkness and filth dwell together in the tenement cellars where the garment-worker sews the buttons on for the sweat-shop taskmaster; goats live amiably with human kids in the cob-webbed basements where little hands are twisting stems for flowers; in the unlovely stable lofts where dwell a dozen persons in a place never intended for one; in windowless attics of tall tenements where frail lives grow frailer day by day.

Lisabetta, Marianna, Fiametta, Teresina,
They are winding stems of roses, one by
one, one by one—

Little children who have never learned to
play;

Teresina softly crying that her fingers ache
to-day.

Tiny Flametta nodding when the twilight
slips in, gray.

High above the clattering street, ambulance
and fire-gong beat;

They sit, curling crimson petals, one by
one, one by one.

Lisabetta, Marianna, Fiametta, Teresina,
They have never seen a rosebush nor a
dewdrop in the sun.

They will dream of the vendetta, Teresina,
Flametta,

Of a Black Hand and a Face behind a grat-
ing;

They will dream of cotton petals, endless,
crimson, suffocating,

Never of a wild rose thicket, nor the sing-
ing of a cricket;

But the ambulance will bellow through the
wanness of their dreams,

And their tired lids will flutter with the
street's hysterical screams.

Lisabetta, Marianna, Fiametta, Teresina,
They are winding stems of roses, one by
one, one by one;
Let them have a long, long playtime, Lord
of Toil, when toil is done;
Fill their baby hands with roses, joyous
roses of the sun.

Reverting to Poor Tom, well may the words of Dickens in Bleak House serve as a text for to-day: "There is not an atom of Tom's shrine, not a cubic inch of any pestilential gas in which he lives, nor an obscurity or degradation about him, nor an ignorance, nor a wickedness, nor a brutality of his committing, but shall work its retribution, through every order of society up to the proudest of the proud and the highest of the high."

Whatever of permanence the ideal democracy which underlies our institutions may achieve, it will not be the survival of conditions such as these, but the fruition of their betterment. Recognition of the sinister elements involved determines the modern type of library work with children. That work rests upon a knowledge of the background which has been pictured, upon the use of methods that shall reach sanely and effectively the contributing causes, upon correlation of all the social forces that can be brought to bear unitedly.

Recognition of conditions and causation gives power to, and justifies the modern trend of, library work with children as the most important and far-reaching of all its great work. Of thirty million men and women, and their children, who have come from over-seas in two generations, 83 per cent were dwellers along the rim of the Mediterranean. Largely from that source have our towns grown overnight into swarming cities. Their children of to-day will be the men and women who in a generation will make or unmake the Republic. Ignorance and greed, rather than necessity, breed the chief menace in our national life. Alone, as a detached social force, the library cannot hope to combat these, but in correlation with other forces may serve as one of the most potent agencies. In the children's rooms and in kindred places,

the missionaries of the book take the disregarded bits of life about them and weave them into a human element of power. The children's rooms in the library and what they imply in the life of the people, are of such recent origin and growth that the complete force of their present-day work will not be fully apparent for a quarter century. What they hope to do, the instruments they purpose to use, are given succinctly in the pronouncement of one of our most progressive libraries.

OBJECTS OF LIBRARY WORK WITH CHILDREN

To make good books available to all children of a community.

To train boys and girls to use with discrimination the adult library.

To reinforce and supplement the class work of the city schools (public, private, parochial and "Sunday" schools).

To co-operate with institutions for civic and social betterment, such as playgrounds, settlements, missions, boys' and girls' clubs; and with commercial institutions employing boys and girls, such as factories, postoffice special delivery division, telegraph and telephone agencies and department stores.

And first and last to build character and develop literary taste through the medium of books and the influence of the children's librarian.

Pursuing these purposes, endeavoring to meet these tests, library work with children will make for better citizenship. It will take account not only of the children of the poor, but of the children of the well-to-do, who may need that influence even more. In the cities, which now overshadow our national life, there are no longer homes; there are flats, where the boys and girls are tolerated—perhaps.

"Our problem is not the bad boy, but rather the modern city," says Prof. Allen Hoben. "The normal boy has come honestly by his love of adventure, his motor propensities and his gang instincts. It is when you take this healthy biological product and set him down in the midst of city restrictions that serious trouble ensues. For the city has been built for economic convenience, and with little thought for human welfare. Industrial aim is evidenced to every sense. You smell industrialism in the far-reaching odors of the stockyards. You hear it in the roar of the elevated hard by the windows of the poor. You see it in a water front that people cannot use, and you touch it in the fleck of soot that is usually on your nose. The proof of indus-

trial aggression ceases to be humorous, however, when it shows itself in the small living quarters of many a city flat where boys are supposed to find the equivalent of the old-time house. Constituted as he is, the boy cannot but be a nuisance in the flat community. And because the flat dweller moves frequently, he will be without those real neighbors of long standing whose leniency formerly robbed the law of its victims. Furthermore, he has no particular quarters of his own where he may satisfy his sense of proprietorship and save up the numerous things he collects with a view to using them in construction. The flat dwellers will not permit the noise or litter incident to such building as a boy likes; and he has little if any part in the labor of conducting the house. He loses dignity as a helpful and necessary member of the family, he loses that loyalty which attaches to the old familiar places of boyhood experience and strengthens many a man to-day, making him more kind and consistent in his living by virtue of homestead memories."

So the boy is driven to the street as his domain. It is his playground. And here he encounters the policeman. Of 717 children arrested in one month in New York City, more than half were arrested for playing games. Parenthetically, the fact may be quoted that in this children's chief playground in a period of ten months 67 children were killed and 196 injured.

Unerringly, these facts point to a union of social forces—the children's library and the children's playground, a realization of that clear comprehension which the ancient Greeks had of the unity between the body and the mind. Quoting Plato: "If children are trained to submit to laws in their plays, the love of law enters their souls with the music accompanying their games, never leaves them, and helps them in their development."

Having in thought physical recreation as a stimulus to mental development, in combination bringing home the joyousness of life, an ideal union of forces is being effected in some of the larger cities. In some places, the movement has assumed

but an initial stage—a bit of tent shelter for distribution of books to children gathered at the sand pile. In some instances co-operation has joined the work of park breathing centers and library organizations. This has reached completed form in the placement of branch libraries as part of the park equipment, either quarters within a general building, or a separate little building adjacent to or on the athletic field.

But whether in place of high or low degree; whether in rented store or memorial building of monumental type; whether in the rooms of a school building or a corner in a factory; whether by this method or by that, the children's librarian employs the printed page to serve as instrument to these ends:

The building of character, making for the best in citizenship.

The enlargement of narrow lives, bringing the joy and savour and beauty of life to the individual.

The opening of opportunity to all alike, which is the essence of democracy.

And in the doing, an incidental and a great contribution is made to society as a whole. For, as the story hour unfolds a new world to the listener whose life has been bounded by a litter-covered alley and three bare walls, or whose look into the outside world has been perhaps a roof of tar and gravel and a yawning chasm beyond, so the development of the imagination through the right sort of books shall make possible the fullest development of the individual boy and girl. In many a life there has been a supreme moment when some circumstance, some stimulus has changed that life for good or ill. For want of that stimulus, the dormant power of many a man has gone to waste. Half the derelicts of humanity who are but outcasts of the night had in them the making of good men—perhaps some of them of great men, in science or in art. There is no waste that is greater than lost opportunity; there is no loss so great as undiscovered resource. Speaking of imagination in work, Mr. Hamilton Wright Mabie points out that:

"So long as the uses of the imagination in creative work are so little comprehended by the great majority of men, it can hardly be expected that its practical uses will be understood. There is a general if somewhat vague recognition of the force and beauty of its achievements as illustrated in the work of Dante, Raphael, Rembrandt and Wagner; but very few people perceive the play of this supreme architectural and structural faculty in the great works of engineering, or in the sublime guesses at truth which science sometimes makes when she comes to the end of the solid road of fact along which she has traveled. The scientist, the engineer, the constructive man in every department of work, uses the imagination quite as much as the artist; for the imagination is not a decorator and embellisher, as so many appear to think; it is a creator and constructor. Wherever work is done on great lines or life is lived in fields of constant fertility, the imagination is always the central and shaping power."

I would have liked in this over-lengthy, but yet fragmentary survey of the field from the viewpoint of the library, to say something of the mistakes which have perhaps been made, and which may still be made unguardedly by reason of over-zeal, whereby the relationship of the work to other things may be ignored or misunderstood; of the danger that over-strong consciousness as to possession of high ideals may dictate too urgent use of books that may have literary style, but do not reach the heart of the boy—driving him to the comic supplement and to the dregs of print for his reading hours. These, and other comments must be left for another occasion.

I would also have liked to say something of the history of work with children in libraries, but Miss Josephine Rathbone has told the story fully and well. In that history, when it shall be written a quarter century hence, it will be fitting to give full meed of honor to Samuel Swett Greene, Edwin H. Anderson, Mrs. H. L. Elmendorf, Miss Frances J. Olcott, Miss Linda A. Eastman and some of the other splendid women of

the profession whose presence here precludes the mention of their names.

So, too, I would have liked to give the result, statistically, of an inquiry, which the helpful kindness of Miss Faith E. Smith, chairman of this section, has enabled me to make. It must suffice here to limit the statement to a brief summary that shows less what has been accomplished than what remains to be attempted:

There are in the United States to-day approximately 1,500 public libraries containing each more than 5,000 volumes. The number reporting children's work is 525, with a total of 676 rooms having an aggregate seating capacity of 21,821, and an available combined supply of 1,771,161 volumes on open shelves. The number of libraries in which story hours are held is 152, and 304 report work with schools. Of course, this work is pitifully meager as to many libraries. The number of children who come more or less under the direct influence of children's librarians is generously estimated as 1,035,195 (103 libraries, including all the large systems reporting). There are in the United States of children from 6 to 16 years of age, approximately thirty-three millions.

Behind the work of the children's librarians there is a fine spirit of optimism—not blind to difficulties, but courageous, ardent and hopeful.

Disregarding ridicule, which is but a cheap substitute for wit; regardful of criticism, which is often provocative or promotive of improvement, inspired with the dignity of their high calling, and with a fine vision that projects itself into the future, the librarians engaged in the work with children willingly give thereto the finest and the best of personality that they possess. Descriptive of their spirit, we may aptly paraphrase the words of a great humanitarian of our own generation:

"Some there are, the builders of humanity's temples, who are laboring to give a vast heritage to the children of all the world. They build patiently, for they have faith in their work.

"And this is their faith—that the power of the world springs from the common

labor and strife and conquest of the countless ages of human life and struggle; that not for a few was that labor and that struggle, but for all. And the common labor of the race for the common good and the common joy will bring that fulness of life which sordid greed and blighting ignorance would make impossible."

And you have the faith of the builders.

SECOND SESSION

Monday evening, May 22.

The second session consisted of a round table discussion, conducted by the chairman, Miss Faith E. Smith, director of training class, Chicago public library. The first topic was Intermediate work and the discussion was led by Mr. W. L. Brown, librarian of the Buffalo public library. Mr. Brown had with him a most interesting list of the books included in the intermediate department by the Buffalo public library. These books, he said, are at present shelved in one corner of the children's room, but their use could be increased by putting them on separate shelves in the open shelf room and placing an assistant in immediate charge of this work. The concensus of the opinions brought out by the discussion showed that the best use of the books was made when they were near the adult collection, but in charge of a special assistant.

Mr. R. R. Bowker, editor of the Library journal, spoke to the section concerning Mrs. Minerva Sanders, for many years librarian at Pawtucket, Rhode Island, who thirty years ago was doing work with children. It was voted that a telegram of congratulations for her years of service, and good wishes for the years to come, be sent to Mrs. Sanders, who was affectionately known to the older members of the Association as "Mawtucket." Mr. Bowker and Mr. Peacock of Westerly, R. I., were appointed a committee to send this telegram.

The next discussion was on the question of Library work in summer playgrounds, led by Miss Gertrude Andrus, superintendent of the children's department of the Seattle public library. Miss Andrus

confined herself to the practical details and mechanical routine of playground library work. She said in part:

The library in a summer playground serves a double purpose; it supplies books in a district not otherwise reached by the library and it acts as a lure to the use of the main library. If the books are attractive, the children will follow them to the library and thus become permanent borrowers. So it is plain that the books we place in our summer playgrounds must be of the most popular type. Easy books, picture books, fairy tales, stories, histories, books of travel, and books on games and manual arts are the ones in most demand. A knowledge of the district in which the playground is located is also necessary. If the children have a school library and are accustomed to reading, the books sent to the playground will differ from the kind sent to one in a foreign district where little reading has been done.

As the library room is invariably used for other work on other days, the books must be locked up. A satisfactory solution of this is a built-in bookcase with adjustable doors which may easily be lifted from their sockets and set aside when access to the books is desired, and may be replaced and padlocked when the day's work is done. The arrangement of the room and the charging desk should always be made so that the exit can be very carefully supervised.

In order to conserve our time so that we may have leisure to give attention to individual children, we must arrange to have the mechanical part of the work as systematic as possible. Playground library work is a life of stress and strain. Everything comes in rushes. There is always a mad dash for the door as soon as the library is opened, for each child is sure that unless he is the first he will miss the good book that he is convinced is there. This rush of course makes it difficult to discharge the books, slip them, shelve them, and at the same time charge the ones the children have selected, to say nothing of helping the children in their choice. We have therefore found it best to collect the books be-

forehand, discharge them and distribute the cards among the children before opening the library doors. When the Newark system is used, however, and a child has drawn two books, this may result in considerable confusion, for the books may be separated and one may not be sure that both charges on the card should be cancelled. When our first playground library in Seattle opened, we used the Browne system of charging and this proved so satisfactory that we have continued to use it in the others. According to this method, each borrower receives two cards. When a book is borrowed, the book slip is drawn and put with one of the borrower's cards in a small envelope. It is readily seen how easy it is to avoid complications when the books are gathered before the opening of the library, for the slip of each one is with the borrower's card, and if the borrower returns no book, no card is given him. After the books are discharged and shelved and the cards distributed, the children are admitted. In this way much of the confusion incident to opening is eliminated and more time is secured to help the children make their choice.

In order that the care of the books may not interfere with the children's play, we have devised a checking system by means of which the children may leave their books in charge of the librarian until they are ready to go home. This not only allows the children freedom in play but obviates the possibility of loss of books through their being left on benches and swings. The playground is a place of freedom and fun and good fellowship, and the library's rules should be made as inconspicuous as possible.

The librarian should be not only willing, but anxious to enter into the life of the playground as far as her duties permit. One way in which she will be able to make herself popular not only with the children but with the instructors is by means of story telling. Joseph Lee says that story telling is the only passive occupation permissible on a playground and the librarian thus finds her work ready to her hand. She is able to advertise her books, make

friends with the children in a most effective way, and at the same time relieve the playground instructor of a duty which is sometimes found irksome.

She must remember that she is an integral part of that playground, not a weekly visitor, and she must throw herself into the interests and activities of the children with all the enthusiasm at her command.

In the discussion which followed, Mr. A. Zelenko, special correspondent of the Moscow newspapers, told of the "graphic hours" held in a settlement house in Moscow and resembling the story hours held in American libraries. Paper, crayons, and water colors are furnished the children who then draw any story they choose. The drawings are submitted to a committee who choose the best for exhibition. Mr. John F. Phelan, of the Chicago public library, gave a brief description of the public playgrounds of Chicago and the way in which the library co-operates. In the small parks, where emphasis is placed on work with children, story hours are held once or twice a week, and there is an organized library league for the purpose of teaching the children to use the books carefully. Miss Jane Conard, supervisor of playground libraries, Pittsburgh, told of the work there and the eagerness with which the libraries were welcomed by the playground authorities.

Miss HARRIET A. WOOD, supervisor of work with schools, Library Association of Portland, Oregon, read a paper on

PROBLEMS OF WORK WITH SCHOOLS

The first problem in organizing the work with the schools is the relation of the school department to other lines of library activity. Shall it be attached to one of the regular departments of the library or have a separate organization? In Portland the latter course has been taken for the following reasons:

A school department is intended to serve all the teaching force in the community,

private and public, secular and religious, from kindergarten to college. As its chief function is to bring all teachers to a full conception of their library privileges, this can be best accomplished if the school department makes its work tributary to every other department.

In serving the grade teacher the school department must be familiar with the juvenile books; in helping the high school and college teacher, it must know the resources of the adult circulating and reference collections. To care properly for the libraries already in schools and temporary collections it must work hand in hand with the catalog department; while a clear conception of relations with all other forms of extension work such as branches and stations is imperative.

The second fundamental problem is the real attitude of school authorities toward library work as related to schools. Dr. Herbert Putnam in May Public Libraries expresses "the doubt whether the zeal for 'extension work' is not inducing librarians to activities outside of their proper province or feasible abilities; and incidentally tending to enfeeble the sense of responsibility on the part of other agencies, particularly the schools." To test the truth of this statement a number of school reports were consulted. Do school boards, superintendents and principals have sufficient belief and interest in the work to give it definite and hearty support? Shall the librarian be left to persuade each individual teacher of the value of a library card and familiarity with books? In short, what shall be the functions of the teacher and what the functions of the librarian? The president of one school board (Milwaukee) puts himself on record in the following words:

"We cannot flatter ourselves that all learning is obtained in the school-house. Closely allied to our school system by virtue of the character of its work is the public library.

"Realizing and appreciating the valuable assistance which our schools have received from the public library in the past, still I feel called upon to urge a greater co-opera-

tion between these educational institutions. I fear that generally throughout the city not enough stress has been laid upon the value and necessity for a library education. It is not enough that material should be furnished the boys and girls by the library; it is essential that the pupils should come into personal contact with the library, its methods and facilities. I believe that it is as essential for the pupils from the early grades to acquire a knowledge of the library and the methods of obtaining its benefits, as it is for them to study the various subjects in the several grades. Is it not true that as a supplement to the regular work in the school, the public library system is of inestimable value and that as an assurance of a continued education after leaving the public schools, no matter what are the circumstances of the parents, it is of vital importance that the public library habit should be formed by all our pupils? I suggest that principals and teachers inform themselves as to the material to be found in the library nearest their buildings, and then with the co-operation of the librarian in charge urge upon the pupils the value and necessity of the systematic use of that institution."

In another part of his report he says: "The school system which does not each year demand more of every teacher has already begun to decline. As members of the board of school directors, we must ever bear in mind that our obligation is first to the children."

The superintendent of Oakland writes: "It is the duty of the school to train the children in the proper use of the means afforded by the city for educational development."

The superintendent of Indianapolis states: "Art museums, public libraries, public parks and buildings, factories, banks, etc., in short, the whole city, is becoming a part of the schoolroom."

In the report of the superintendent of Newark we read: "Teachers should be sufficiently at home in the great world of prose literature dealing with real things to select suitable material, and professionally trained to place it before their classes in a

way to stimulate their activity and liking." The practice of omitting important classes of literature such as biography is explained "As the faulty application of a principle of education, namely, that the interests of the children are determining factors in the choice of books. This principle has been interpreted to mean a *laissez faire* attitude on the part of the teachers, a passive waiting to see whether the child likes the piece and if not—that settles the question." In the course of study issued by this same school system occur the following suggestive directions:

"The teacher should frequently read from a library book and comment on it for the purpose of directing the pupils to the Free public library."

"Pupils should be taught to consult reference books and others for information. One-half of education consists in knowing where to find knowledge. Pupils should be encouraged to use the Free public library."

"Topics for research in history, science and literature should be assigned as training in the use of reference books." Under the headings, "Physiology" and "Civics," is the excellent advice: "See book list prepared by Free public library."

The fact that most of the reports examined made no mention at all of the library, while others spoke of it in complimentary but unrelated terms and only a few seemed conscious of unused resources leads librarians seriously to consider their present relations with the schools in their immediate fields. There is a great diversity of opinion among librarians as to the best way to work with children. Some say that the classroom library is bad in its effects, making the pupils and teachers content with a meager collection of books; that the children should be served from children's rooms in central and branch libraries; while others would do away with children's rooms except as laboratories and reach the children through the teachers.

All librarians are agreed, however, that every child should be reached, so that he shall read the best books at the right age, that he shall understand how to use a book as a tool, that he shall come to look upon

books as necessary to his progress and happiness and become a permanent user of the library.

When the active support of the school board and school superintendent has been gained, the teacher will receive definite instructions as to her part in the problem to be worked out, and the librarian will be solicited to make suggestions when courses of study are being planned. Is this not due both teacher and librarian?

Speaking concretely, the experience of one year's work in Portland bears testimony to the value of a system of library work with schools in which the schools carry a large share of responsibility.

When School District No. 1, Multnomah County, was approached by the Library Association of Portland, it was found not only quite ready to appropriate \$20,000 for the purchase of books, but also to care for classroom libraries according to the rules already in force throughout the library system and to deliver the books to the building. The library on its part agreed to employ the librarians, to select and prepare the books for circulation, and to take general charge of the work.

Thus from the beginning the teachers as a whole were sure that the school authorities believed in the library. The faithful teacher was relieved of the burden of carrying books back and forth from the children's room, and the indifferent teacher was aware that the children's interests were first in the minds of the board. So far, the teaching side of work with schools has not received much attention, but in planning for next year it is the intention to organize the instruction of teachers and pupils only with the full support of the school authorities. A joint committee of school and library board takes up all matters of common interest. Therefore this body must first be convinced of the importance of any radical measure. While there will always be necessity for work with individual teachers and pupils, we are convinced that greater progress will be made if we attack our problem at the other end of the line.

Miss JESSIE H. MILLARD, children's li-

brarian of the Library Association of Portland, talked on "Reference work with children." Miss Millard said in part:

"Reference work with children reaches further than with adults, in that it includes not only the finding of the material *wanted*, but also the instruction and training in the *use* of that material. The aim of our children's department is to give the child a knowledge of the use of books for a definite purpose—not only is he to gain information in looking up a subject, but he is to learn the use of books in general.

It seems almost unnecessary to say that the fewer books your department contains, the better returns must those few be forced to yield. Our catalog is extremely analytical and contains references to all subjects that are used by school children. A chapter or a few pages on certain subjects often prove sufficient. Many books, if carefully analyzed will answer the questions brought every day by the children, and amply repay for the time and trouble taken to analyze them.

While a general effort has always been made to instruct the children individually in the use of the library, only this year have we done class work and one of the most interesting phases of our work is the visit to the library in a class of the eighth and ninth grades.

In April, 260 children were given instruction in the use of the library. First, a short talk was given on the development of the book, and the various parts of a book were explained, the title-page, table of contents, index, preface. Then the children were told how to use the dictionary, encyclopedia and the card catalog, and how to find a book on the shelf from the numbers on the card. Whatever we tell them in the way of instruction is always supplemented by practice. A set of test questions is given at the end of the talk.

Mrs. ALICE G. WHITBECK, librarian of the public library, Richmond, California, spoke very briefly on "Work with children in small libraries."

She said in part:

In considering the work with children in a small library, the limitations might at

first seem to be due to lack of funds, lack of room, lack of help, lack of time. But a second thought will show us that the only real limitations the work may have, will be those of the librarian herself.

Let us consider a few things that the very busy librarian can do. She can create a library atmosphere in that small room or corner. She can teach children who never saw a library before and who have never been taught to enter a room in any but the noisiest and roughest way, how to enter that little library room with hats off—to leave giggling outside, to step gently, to care for the comfort of others, to treat the books with respect.

She can very quietly and unobtrusively create a taste in these children for the refined and best in pictures, by making a start with the very best, if only one is added at a time. She can keep from making her room a hodge-podge of inferior pictures and exhibits, under the plea that it makes the room look "homey." Once in a while the picture-bulletin can be used with poster effect, but from the first she should try to keep ideals before the child rather than the realities, no matter how funny or interesting the latter may be.

She can steadily lead the children to the best in literature by supplying only the best. As her limit in funds will be small, her choice of books can be made more carefully and her one or two hundred books represent the very choice of children's literature.

If the room is too small to admit of very many children, and if an increase in attendance will in any way discommode the larger reading-room patrons, then she must take her library to the children and with the co-operation of the superintendent of schools arrangements can be made to send books to the schools. This will be an innovation in many small places, but it will soon appeal to the teachers, and if the experiment is tried in a small way and proves successful, it will become known in the right places and more funds will be given for another year.

Owing to the lateness of the hour the discussion was not vigorous and when the

business meeting was called only a few faithful friends responded. Miss Andrus of Seattle, filled the position of secretary left vacant by the resignation of Miss Mary Douglas of St. Louis. After the reading of the minutes, the secretary read the report of Miss Esther Strauss of Cincinnati, who had been appointed the previous year to investigate the organization of other sections, to see if an Executive board were necessary, and to provide for a succession in office. Miss Strauss recommended one of the following methods:

1. Creation of the office of vice-chairman.
2. Creation of standing committees.

An amendment to the constitution was voted, providing for the election of a vice-chairman. The committee on nominations reported and Miss Mary de Bure McCurdy,

supervisor of work with schools, Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh, was elected chairman, and Miss Adeline Zachert, director of children's work, Louisville free public library, secretary.

An exhibit of books prepared for the Section by the children's department of the Carnegie library of Pittsburgh was very helpful. It consisted of three parts:

Exhibit A: Mediocre and harmful books for children.

Included under this head were the Nickel Libraries, Alger, Castlemon, the Elsie books, Optic, Outcault, and others.

Exhibit B: Some good popular books which may take the place of mediocre and harmful fiction.

Exhibit C: Editions of some classic and standard books for children.

COLLEGE AND REFERENCE SECTION

The College and reference section was called to order by Mr. J. C. Rowell, librarian of the University of California. Miss Julia Steffa, librarian of Pomona college library, was appointed secretary.

The first paper on "Some problems in book numbers" by H. RALPH MEAD, of the University of California library, was read by Mr. G. T. Little of Bowdoin college library.

SOME PROBLEMS IN BOOK NUMBERS

Book numbers are used to differentiate individual books of the same class. The class number indicates the subject. Copy numbers are usually added to distinguish duplicates and volume numbers to distinguish volumes of the same work. The combination of class number and book number forms the call number for a specific book. To be of practical use in procuring books from the shelves and in manipulating library records, the call number needs to be as concise and simple as possible. The book number depends a great deal upon the system of classification and the minuteness of classification. So, although it is not likely that

any two libraries will have a uniform method of assigning book numbers, still the fundamental points can be compared. As a basis for such comparison the scheme of book numbering, as used in the University of California library, will be briefly explained.

The system of classification in use in the library of the University of California is one devised by the librarian, Mr. J. C. Rowell; the scheme assigns numbers to the main divisions and numbers followed by one or more letters to the subdivisions, e. g., 305=Education, 305d=History of Education, 305dv=History of Education in the United States. The books are arranged alphabetically under the class number by means of the Cutter author number; this number is carried to three places in classes of any considerable size, while two places suffice for the smaller classes, such as subject bibliography. The simplest form of book number is like 305-B986 for Butler's Meaning of Education. Books by the same author, in the same class, are distinguished by using the initial letter of first word of the title, that is not an article, of the original language; transla-